

Hodge House,
Wiscasset, Maine

HABS-ME-49

HABS
ME
8 Wisc,
5-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

District of Maine

Historic American Buildings Survey
Josiah T. Tubby, District Officer
537 Congress Street, Portland, Maine

HABS

ME.

8 Wisc

5-

"HODGE HOUSE"

Wiscasset, Lincoln County, Maine

Owners

Miss Alice D. Taylor
Mrs. Mary Taylor Hubbard

Date of Erection

1787

Builder

Henry Hodge

Present Condition

The original house probably included the present sitting room and kitchen,--the side stairs being the early flight. The house then faced North West. Later, by the addition of a new hall, dining room and parlor, the house was converted to the central hall type facing South West. Still later a bay was added on the South East. The small wing to the North West may have been added before or after the dining room and parlor. It seems likely, however, that it was later than the conversion of the house to the central hall type.

Number of Stories

Two and One Half

Materials of Construction

Frame building with foundation of stone. Exterior walls clapboarded, roof shingled, two large chimneys in the main house. Kitchen fireplace with crane, brick oven, copper kettle with brick fire box for heating water, also five other fireplaces. Open string front stairway with panelled dado. The interior of the house is plastered and panelled. Two interesting features of the house are the heavy window stools and the plan of the porch "entry" with closet. An unusual feature is the dormer window formed by the four inch overhang of the shingles. There was originally another dormer like this one on the west side of the roof.

The gable windows in the attic are placed with no regard to the ridge or gable center and yet this lack of symmetry is not noticed on the house itself. The gable window is centered over the windows below. 8. Wisc 5.

The curved partition in the side entrance forms a spacious china closet.

Additional Data

There is an interesting story connected with the Hodge House. During the War of 1812, the residents of Wiscasset and other towns along the Sheepscot River became alarmed to find that British Naval vessels were anchored at the mouth of the river. It was feared that the town would be invaded by the British. Henry Hodge, seeking to protect his valuables, ordered his trusted negro servant to gather together all the best silver in the house and to hide it where it would be safe until all danger was passed. This was evidently thoroughly done.

After the necessity for hiding the silver had passed, Mr. Hodge asked his negro servant where the silver was located. The servant hesitated and stuttered in his effort to explain the matter and during the course of the negro's efforts at speech, Mr. Hodge became so infuriated that he struck the servant a sharp blow on the head with his cane. The negro became insane and died without ever revealing the whereabouts of the family's best silver. To this day, it has not been located although the land all around the house is said to have been searched thoroughly.

Joseph L. Neal, draftsman, who measured the Hodge House for the H. A. B. S. and who submitted the story of the silver writes the following: "If you will glance at the cellar plan of the Hodge House, you will see in the lower left hand corner(south) what appears to be a solid piece of masonry about seven feet thick for which there is no reason-unless it is not solid,- and an piece of false wall was built to form a hiding place. When its existence was exposed by our measurements, I at first thought our figures were in error, but they checked. The present owners had no knowledge of the masonry until informed by me. It is expected this coming summer that the wall will be examined thoroughly."

Eleanor E. Jannell

Approved:

Joseph L. Neal

February 18, 1937

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6/14/57